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Daily Highlights

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THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

* Secretary-General calls for global ban on production and use of land-mines, and destruction of stockpiles, at high-level International Meeting on Mine Clearance in Geneva.

* Secretary-General discusses reconstruction of Gaza and provision of aid with Yasser Arafat; hears of progress in Middle East peace process.

* UNPROFOR condemns Serb air attack on power station in Bihac pocket as flagrant violation of no-fly zone; heavy fighting reported in Srebrenica.

* Haiti's Provisional Electoral Council decides to hold extra first-round elections in districts which experienced irregularities on 25 June.

* WHO Director-General says Ebola outbreak in Zaire could be officially declared over within two months.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali today called for a global ban on the production and use of land-mines and the destruction of stockpiles. He made that call at the International Meeting on Mine Clearance in Geneva. The Secretary-General convened it to galvanize world public opinion on the land-mine crisis and to enhance momentum for international humanitarian action.

According to the Secretary-General's 1994 report "Assistance in Mine Clearance", there are more than 110 million land-mines spread in 64 countries around the world. Between two and five million more are planted each year. Land-mines kill some 10,000 non-combatants every year, and maim, blind or otherwise injure thousands more. They also adversely affect development by curtailing agricultural activities or rendering fertile land uninhabitable.

The three-day International Meeting on Mine Clearance brings together high-level government officials and representatives of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations concerned with the problem of land-mines. It provides

(more)

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a forum for affected countries to elaborate their needs and for donors to announce contributions to the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Clearance.

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Among his other appointments in Geneva today, the Secretary-General met with Yasser Arafat, President of the Palestinian Authority and Chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). They discussed the reconstruction of Gaza and the provision and coordination of aid to the area. Mr. Arafat briefed the Secretary-General on his recent meetings with Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin of Israel and Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres. He stated that there had been progress in those meetings.

The Secretary-General also attended the high-level segment of the 1995 substantive session of the Economic and Social Council. He participated in a political dialogue on the world economy and international economic cooperation with Michel Camdessus, Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF); Renato Ruggiero, Director-General of the World Trade Organization (WTO); James Wolfensohn, President of the World Bank; and Carlos Fortin, Officer-in-Charge of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

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The United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) has strongly deplored yesterday's Serb air attack on a Bosnian Government power station in the Bihac pocket. It described the incident as a flagrant violation of the no-fly zone established by the Security Council. The attack resulted in one civilian casualty, but the Force was unable to conduct a full investigation because of restrictions on movement imposed by the Bosnian Army.

The situation in Croatia was tense today, with further Croatian Army troop movements reported in Sectors North and South. There was also firing on the border of the Bihac pocket. Meanwhile, there was heavy fighting in Srebrenica, and shells landed in the Dutch Battalion camp. However, there was a decrease in the number of firing incidents in Sarajevo. Bosnian Serb forces yesterday targeted a British Battalion convoy travelling on the Mount Igman road.

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Haiti's Provisional Electoral Council has decided to hold additional first-round elections on 22 or 24 July in districts where elections did not take place or in which there were irregularities on 25 June, according to a United Nations

spokesman. He noted that the Council had not yet made an official announcement in that regard.

The spokesman reported that the run-off elections had been postponed from 23 July to mid-August. It was expected that partial results from last month's elections would be announced over the weekend.

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The Ebola haemorrhagic fever outbreak in Zaire could be officially declared at an end within the next two months, according to the Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO), Hiroshi Nakajima. Dr. Nakajima made that comment at WHO headquarters in Geneva after returning from a fact-finding mission to Zaire.

A total of 296 suspected or confirmed Ebola cases have been reported, of whom 233 have died. Dr. Nakajima said the current outbreak differed from one in 1976 in that it consisted of a series of waves of cases, whereas there had been only one major wave in earlier outbreak.

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